



EPI WATCH

Monthly Epidemiology Newsletter

205 Dr. MLK Jr. St. N
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
(727) 824-6900

Director
Ulyee Choe, DO

Editor
Rebecca Bohinc, MPH, CPH
Rebecca.Bohinc@FLHealth.gov

Division of Disease Control and Health Protection

Disease Reporting
To report diseases and clusters of illness:
Phone: (727) 824-6932
Fax: (727) 484-3865
(excluding HIV/AIDS)

To report HIV/AIDS by mail:
Surveillance Room 3-138
205 Dr. MLK Jr St. N

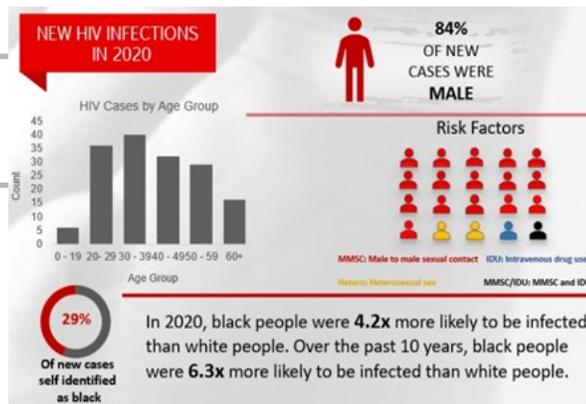
Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/HealthyPinellas

Follow us on Twitter
@HealthyPinellas

Pinellas EHE Prepares for Pride & National HIV Testing Day

By: Nicole Houston, MPH, EHE Consultant
Edited by: Dionne Nixon, MS, HIV/STI Consultant

Ending the HIV Epidemic (or EHE) is a national initiative developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in 2019 to reduce new human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infections. EHE serves two main goals: to reduce new HIV infections to by 75% by 2025 and at least 90% by the year 2030. For more information on national the EHE initiative click [here](#).



Though EHE is a national program, there are several states and counties with disproportionately higher incident rates of HIV/AIDS and were designated as Phase 1 locations to begin EHE planning and implementation; Pinellas is one of these counties. The most recent Pinellas County HIV epidemiological profile revealed that 84% of new HIV cases are male with most new cases diagnosed between ages 20-39. The profile also identifies the

highest risk factors for HIV among individuals reporting male to male sexual contact (MMSC). Black and Latinx populations are also 4.2- 6.3 times more likely to acquire HIV than whites in Pinellas County. Due to these statistics, Pinellas EHE has taken a grassroots, community-based approach to Ending the HIV Epidemic. Pinellas EHE’s vision is to end the HIV epidemic in Pinellas County by providing equitable and accessible HIV services and resources for all. Its mission is to build capacity within Pinellas County to provide equitable HIV services through collaborative community networking that promotes and sustains accessible resources and services for all.

Pinellas EHE attends and promotes national HIV/AIDS Awareness days and local events acknowledging these days and months. June is Pride month and Pinellas EHE has a plethora of Pride events that they will be supporting by providing information, incentives and resources for HIV testing and treatment. Shades of Pride is one event that the Pinellas EHE team and volunteers will be attending. This event is impactful as it celebrates and reaches the intersection of two marginalized populations in Pinellas County, the LGBTQIA+ community as well as the Black and Brown communities.

National HIV Testing Day is June 27 and is a day to emphasize and encourage HIV testing. To learn more about this day, click [here](#). The Pinellas Planning Partnership (PPP) includes entities such as Pinellas EHE, METRO Inclusive Health, The Pinellas Care Clinic and others. PPP will be facilitating a National HIV Testing Day event at Walgreens (3350 Central Ave, St Pete) from 10 a.m.- 7 p.m. Pinellas EHE will provide incentives and education related to HIV testing. Additionally, all Florida DOH locations will also offer free HIV testing on Monday, June 27 in honor of this awareness day.



HIV Testing is Self-Care
Take care of you, test for HIV!
Get tested for HIV at a local site.
Make sure you're ready for 2022.
10-15 min. rapid HIV test results only take about a minute.

Providing Free:

- Information & Resources
- RHCE and Risk C. Test
- Health Screenings

June 27 | 10AM - 7PM
Walgreens | 3350 Central Ave, St. Pete



Tracking Neonatal Zika Exposures 5 Years After the Epidemic

By: Ian Stryker

The Zika virus epidemic swept through parts of South America, the Caribbean, and the Southeastern United States in 2015-2016. The virus was first identified in the Zika forest of Uganda in 1947. It is primarily spread through the bite of infected *Aedes* species mosquito. Zika infections be either asymptomatic or cause symptoms such fever, rash, headache, joint pain, red eyes, or muscle pain. Infection does not typically require hospitalization and death is rare. After infection, individuals are likely to be protected against Zika infections in the future. One primary concern during the Zika epidemic was infection among pregnant women, which can result in fetal birth defects. The most concerning birth defect during this time was microcephaly, a condition where the baby's head size is smaller than expected resulting in other developmental complications.



During the epidemic, there were an estimated 1,000 babies born in the United States to mothers with Zika infections during pregnancy. In 2016, there were at least 250 babies born to confirmed, Zika positive mothers. Of those babies, one in ten were born with some form of defect. There have been ongoing cohort studies to monitor the development of some of these children. One of these studies is being conducted by Dr. Sarah Mulkey at the Children's National Hospital in Washington D.C. Although their study is still ongoing, preliminary findings reveal signs that some of the children are displaying reduced fine motor skills for their age groups. As these studies progress, MRI's will be performed to determine if there are any structural differences between these children and those born to mothers without Zika. Currently some of these studies are struggling with another factor,

COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic has given rise to more questions. Are these developmental issues being observed a result of Zika? Or COVID? As these studies progress, we may gain more insight into these questions. While Zika virus is not a large concern currently, protecting yourself from mosquito bites can protect you from a host of other infections.

To protect yourself from Zika and other potential arboviral illnesses:

[Prevent Tick and Mosquito Bites](#) | [Division of Vector-Borne Diseases](#) | [NCEZID](#) | [CDC](#)

References

- Simmons-Duffin, S. (2021, December 27). *5 years later, researchers assess how children exposed to zika are developing*. NPR. Retrieved June 16, 2022, from <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2021/12/27/1062696181/5-years-later-researchers-assess-how-children-exposed-to-zika-are-developing>
- CDC Newsroom. (2017, April 6). *About 1 in 10 U.S. pregnant women with confirmed Zika infection had a fetus or baby with birth defects in 2016*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved June 16, 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2017/p0404-zika-pregnancy.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019, October 7). *Overview*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved June 16, 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/about/overview.html#:~:text=Zika%20virus%20was%20first%20discovered,Asia%2C%20and%20the%20Pacific%20Islands>.

Community Cluster of Legionnaires' Disease in the Bronx

By: Rebecca Bohinc, MPH, CPH

On May 20, 2022 the New York City Health Department issued a statement to alert the public about a community cluster of Legionnaires' disease in the Highbridge neighborhood of the Bronx. At that time, four individuals had been diagnosed with the illness since May 9 while others were being evaluated and awaiting a formal diagnosis. The public was advised to seek medical attention if they developed flu-like symptoms, fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

Legionnaires' disease is a type of pneumonia that occurs when an individual inhales aerosolized water droplets containing the bacteria or less often when someone accidentally swallows water containing the bacteria which then enters into the lungs. *Legionella* bacteria are naturally occurring in the environment but can find their way into manmade water systems and amplify if given the proper environmental conditions. The bacteria can then travel by aerosolized water droplets originating from sources such as cooling towers, hot tubs, shower heads or sink faucets, water tanks and heaters, complex plumbing systems and even decorative fountains. Ensuring an effective water management plan is in place to monitor disinfectant, water chemistry, and overall water flow are key components to preventing the growth of the bacteria. Those at increased risk for developing an infection are those over 50 years of age, current or former smokers, those with chronic lung conditions, underlying health conditions, or those that are immunocompromised. The mortality rate of Legionnaires' Disease is estimated at 10%. In response to the community cluster identified, water sampling and testing was performed at cooling towers in the impacted neighborhoods. Four cooling towers had tested positive for the presence of *Legionella pneumophila* bacteria. Recommendations to immediately disinfect the cooling towers was made and monitored by local public health officials.



When the investigation closed on June 17, the New York City Health Department reported a total of 30 cases were identified. Of those, 28 were hospitalized and sadly, two cases had died.

For more information on Legionnaires' disease and prevention, visit www.cdc.gov/legionella

References:

- City of New York. (May, 2022) Recent Press Releases. <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/about/press/pr2022/updates-community-cluster-of-legionnaires-disease-in-highbridge-bronx.page>

Select Reportable Diseases in Pinellas County

Disease	Pinellas		YTD Total		Pinellas County Annual Totals		
	May 2022	May 2021	Pinellas 2022	Florida 2022	2021	2020	2019
A. Vaccine Preventable							
Measles	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Mumps	0	0	0	5	1	1	3
Pertussis	1	0	1	20	1	8	27
Varicella	3	5	11	191	25	18	32
B. CNS Diseases & Bacteremias							
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD)	0	0	3	38	1	0	3
Meningitis (Bacterial, Cryptococcal, Mycotic)	1	0	8	59	6	5	7
Meningococcal Disease	0	1	0	35	1	2	1
C. Enteric Infections							
Campylobacteriosis	21	27	83	1531	214	247	303
Cryptosporidiosis	1	5	10	198	28	38	62
Cyclosporiasis	0	0	0	9	9	9	28
<i>E. coli</i> Shiga Toxin (+)	1	1	6	347	16	10	22
Giardiasis	4	4	10	456	29	28	52
Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS)	0	0	0	4	0	0	1
Listeriosis	0	0	2	25	3	2	2
Salmonellosis	10	10	53	1793	182	200	200
Shigellosis	2	3	11	282	37	19	22
D. Viral Hepatitis							
Hepatitis A	3	0	8	175	6	3	377
Hepatitis B: Pregnant Woman +HBsAg	1	0	10	156	11	18	21
Hepatitis B, Acute	0	5	8	289	52	40	71
Hepatitis C, Acute	18	3	63	622	89	117	75
E. VectorBorne/Zoonoses							
Animal Rabies	0	0	0	27	0	0	2
Rabies, possible exposure	19	4	66	1831	135	118	128
Chikungunya Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dengue	0	0	1	32	0	1	3
Eastern Equine Encephalitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lyme Disease	0	0	1	75	6	11	19
Malaria	0	0	0	22	2	2	5
West Nile Virus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zika Virus Disease	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
F. Others							
Chlamydia	335	316	1643	n/a	3956	4575	4355
Gonorrhea	168	147	783	n/a	1634	1526	1416
Hansen's Disease	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
Legionellosis	3	0	18	226	36	33	30
Mercury Poisoning	0	1	0	17	2	1	1
Syphilis, Total	58	49	302	n/a	479	493	434
Syphilis, Infectious (Primary and Secondary)	22	25	128	n/a	212	218	190
Syphilis, Early Latent	29	15	125	n/a	166	197	152
Syphilis, Congenital	0	0	3	n/a	5	6	3
Syphilis, Late Syphilis (Late Latent; Neurosyphilis)	7	9	46	n/a	96	72	89
Tuberculosis	3	0	10	n/a	24	24	33
<i>Vibrio</i> Infections	1	1	4	77	13	12	18

*YTD up to May 31, 2022. n/a = not available at this time

Reportable diseases include confirmed and probable cases only. All case counts are current and provisional. Data is collected from the Merlin Reportable Disease database, surveillance systems maintained at the Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County, and Florida CHARTS